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significance of the great centenary of peace. Nearly one-fourth of its pages are devoted to a grossly partisan and misleading account of the American Revolution, the ill-feeling of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic years, and the War of 1912. Two-thirds of the remaining pages record thirty-odd quarrels which arose during the century, and only one-fifth of the book is devoted to the peaceful settlement of those quarrels. Even the short account of these peaceful settlements is marred by a grudging and ill-natured spirit, and the credit for the avoidance of war is given wholly to Americans—wherever at all possible to some Massachusetts statesman. Even the illustrations of the book are in keeping with its contentious spirit. Only seven of them are devoted to peace-making or the peace-makers; while twelve are old English cartoons ridiculing America, or the portraits of the makers of mischief between the two countries. Emulating "Hamlet with Hamlet left out," not the slightest reference is made in these pages to that feature of the Rush-Bagot treaty of 1817 which stilled the war-drums and furled the battle-flags along the nearly four thousand miles of our Canadian boundary line; while Great Britain's assent to the Geneva arbitration of the *Alabama* claims is ascribed to England's unpreparedness for war and her fear of losing Canada! The prime feature of the Cleveland-Olney exaggeration of the Monroe Doctrine, which was repudiated by our own country almost as soon as it was uttered, is passed over in silence, and President Cleveland's bellicose message which brought the two countries to the verge of war is "illuminated" by the words: "England was surprised, and operators in the stock market were greatly annoyed. . . . President Cleveland, moreover, however much Wall street might cry out, had the country with him, and no one today, I think, can question the absolute soundness of his position."

An author who, from his seat in the United States Senate, heard only the voice of Wall street in the mighty "Thou shalt not commit murder" which went up from the hearts of two civilized nations to their respective rulers in that terrible crisis, and who so obviously exults in the clenching of the mailed fist which precipitated that crisis, can scarcely be expected to interpret aright the hundred years of peace which are presumably to be celebrated by peace-lovers, peace-makers and peace-keepers in a genuinely peaceful spirit.

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McMASTER, JOHN BACH. *A History of the People of the United States*. Vol. viii, 1850-1861. Pp. xix, 556. Price, \$2.50. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1913.

This volume marks the completion of a work the earlier portions of which have already established themselves as standard authority in American history. The manner of treatment which Professor McMaster has chosen is familiar. The national life is portrayed as it looked to the people of the period which the chapters cover. The main reliance for material is upon newspaper discussions and to a lesser degree the congressional documents of the period. Little effort is made at formal interpretation but the events and persons are made to speak for themselves.

This concluding volume dealing with the years from 1850 to 1861 is especially valuable because of the large number of developments in that period which have left their influence on our present-day life or have marked the rise of problems still unsolved. Constitutional questions such as the relation of the federal government to the territories, and the nature of the union were in the forefront of public discussion throughout the decade, questions of policy such as the treatment of foreigners, railroad extension, and our duty toward the West Indies were subjects of nation-wide interest, and parties were perfecting the organization of the electorate and clarifying the issues on which the approaching civil war was to be fought.

Few periods better lend themselves to interpretation by the methods Professor McMaster has chosen. The surge of popular opinion in the slavery controversy, the rush to settle the West and to exploit its mines, race-riots, labor troubles, Cuban filibustering, the struggle for Kansas, the battles of the constitutional conventions, the party campaigns and finally the formation of the Confederacy; these are events which can be seen in no way more vividly than through the eyes of the contemporary editors and their correspondents.

The intensity of political life in the decade is mirrored in the fact that one-sixth of the five hundred pages of the book is devoted to a description of party conventions and campaigns and about an equal space to discussions of policy in Congress and to the Kansas conflict.

Many of the economic and social conditions emphasized show the earlier stages of problems still unsolved. Chinese immigration begins to trouble the West in the decade, complaints are made against immigrants, railroad control and strikes for higher wages and shorter hours begin to attract public interest, coinage reform and currency problems claim attention.

In a country so large and so rapidly changing as ours has always been, fruitful ground is offered for the development of unusual social phenomena most of which sweep into prominence for short periods to disappear again when new changes destroy the conditions under which they flourished. Of these the period just before the Civil War had its share. Then flourished native Americanism, the woman's rights movement, bloomerism, spiritualism, prohibition, and Mormonism. The closing chapters deal with the strained conditions surrounding the formation of the confederacy and with the events of the conflict up to the inauguration of Lincoln.

Few works of equal size show as much symmetry of plan as this and few will recommend themselves so highly to those who believe history should be a picture of life as well as a record of facts.

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MAURICE C. EDMUND. *Life of Octavia Hill*. Pp. xi, 591. Price, \$5.00. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1913.

The gracious presence of the lady whose "counterfeit-presentment" adorns so many offices of charity organization societies in the United States pervades this attractive volume in which the biographer has played for the most part the modest rôle of editor. The book is more ample than the general reader will